

JACKSON'S MILL
W TR 412 and TR 409 junction
Breezewood vicinity
Bedford County
Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-353

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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JACKSON'S MILL

HAER No. PA-353

Location: Just W of the junction of TR 412
and TR 409, Breezewood (vic.),
Bedford County, Pennsylvania

Date of Construction: ca. 1839

Present Owner: Shuss family (?)

Present Use: Flour Mill

Significance: Jackson's Mill is one of the best
preserved ante-bellum grist mills
in southwestern Pennsylvania. It
retains much of its mid-to-late
nineteenth century equipment.

Historian: Elaine J. Will, 1992

Project Information: The results of the study of Bedford
County were published in 1994: Kim
E. Wallace (ed), Bedford County and
Fulton County, Pennsylvania: An
Inventory of Historic Engineering
and Industrial Sites (Washington,
D.C.: National Park Service). The
contents of the publication were
transmitted to the Library of
Congress as individual reports.
Research notes, field photos and
copies of historic photos collected
during the project were transmitted
to the AIHP Collection, Special
Collections, Stapleton Library,
Indiana University of Pennsylvania,
Indiana, PA 15705.

Jackson's Mill is a three-story, rectangular, three-by-four-bay wood-frame structure resting on a stone foundation. The mill has clapboard siding, corner boards, and a brick interior chimney in the northeast corner. Its gable roof (with extending gable) is covered with crimped metal roofing. The building's windows are six-over-six and nine-over-six, double hung, and there is a five-paned transom above the door on the north side. Attached to the south side of the mill is a small sawmill, covered by a shed roof. (For a photo of the Jackson's Mill see HAER PA-352, Jackson's Mill Covered Bridge.)

Located just north of the mill is the miller's house, a two-story, three-by-two-bay, single-family vernacular dwelling with some Greek Revival elements, including a front entrance which features a pedimented portico. The house was built in 1840, at about the same time as the mill. (See photo HAER PA-353-A)

A covered bridge spanning Brush Creek stands about 10 yards southeast of Jackson's Mill.

One of at least four mills once located along on a 5-mile span of Brush Creek, this mill was built by John Nycum in 1839, on the site of an earlier tub mill. Nycum and then his son Simon operated the mill until 1867, when it was purchased by partners Hanks and Jackson. Sometime after 1877, Hanks relinquished his share of the property, and M. J. Jackson became sole proprietor of the gristmill. In 1891 Jackson became the first appointed postmaster at the mill, which for the next fourteen years would also serve as a post office for the surrounding vicinity.

In the early part of the 1900s the tract was purchased by Elmer Barnhardt, who continued to operate the mill, grinding livestock feed and various types of flour. In 1916 Barnhardt began to make improvements to the property, rebuilding sections of the mill race and replacing the earthen mill dam with a new, concrete one. However, a federal tax imposed on wheat flour in 1917 prompted Barnhardt to stop the milling of wheat flour and to cease improvement efforts. Consequently, the concrete portion extends only halfway across the breast of the dam. Barnhardt sold the mill to Samuel Shuss in 1951. Shuss added electric motors to some of the machinery and for a few years continued to operate the mill on a limited basis.

Jackson's Mill is no longer in use, though, with the exception of Shuss' minor alterations, it has changed very little. Most pieces of milling equipment--including belts, hoppers, burrstones, and the cups that run on the grain elevator to transport grain to the second floor--remain within the mill and

are still operational or nearly operational. The mill's undershot water wheel is no longer extant, however, and the earthen portion of the mill dam was washed away in 1972. The mill and its equipment, the miller's house, and ninety acres of surrounding property were sold at public auction on August 10, 1991.

Sources:

Beers, F.W. County Atlas of Bedford, Pennsylvania. New York: F.W. Beers & Co., 1877.

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The History of East Providence Township.

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Skillington, Lyn. "Future of Jackson Mills Hangs on Auction." Bedford Inquirer. August 2, 1991.

Waterman, Watkins & Co. History of Bedford, Somerset and Fulton Counties, Pennsylvania. Chicago: Waterman, Watkins & Co., 1884.